



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Public Health Advisory: Drought Causing Low Flows, Less Dilution in Streams and Rivers

The Division of Water Quality is advising the public to refrain from recreational activities, such as swimming and tubing, in or on the water where treated sewage discharges are located. Due to the drought, many of our streams and rivers are experiencing low to zero flow. As a result, streams that receive municipal treated sewage effluent have considerably less dilution than is normal and, in some cases, the flows may be nearly 100 percent effluent.

The following are locations where river flows are considerably less than normal and into which treated sewage is discharged:

- Bear River – Corinne
- Beer Creek – Salem, Payson
- Chalk Creek – Coalville
- Cub River – Richmond
- Dry Creek – Spanish Fork
- Duchesne River – Duchesne
- Eureka Creek – Eureka
- East Canyon Creek – Jeremy Ranch
- Little Bear River – Hyrum, Wellsville
- Malad River – Bear River City, Tremonton
- Pond System – Springville
- Price River – Wellington
- San Pitch River – Moroni
- San Rafael River Tributaries – Castle Dale, Ferron, Emery, Huntington, Orangeville
- Silver Creek – Park City
- Shoal Creek – Enterprise
- Virgin River – St. George
- Other locations – check with your local wastewater service district

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Although all treatment facilities are required to meet appropriate standards to protect public health, the lack of dilution water under these extreme drought conditions may cause the rivers and streams that receive these discharges to experience exceedences of water quality standards, which may raise the risk for water-borne illnesses.

For more information, contact William Moellmer, Division of Water Quality, at (801) 538-6329 or at wmoellmer@utah.gov .

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